

Hawaii MARINE SPORTS

HAWAII MARINE C SECTION

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Competitors swim, pedal, run base triathlon

Lance Cpl. Roger L. Nelson
Combat Correspondent

When a miniature cannon fired May 20, the 234 competitors jumped into the water to begin the 10th Annual Marine Aircraft Group 24 Triathlon.

The triathlon consisted of three events that pushed competitors to pace themselves and try to conserve their energy in order to cross this finish line.

“The first event is the swim,” said Stacy Burkdall, Marine Corps Community Services employee. “Once the cannon fires, they had to swim out and go around the buoys, which ends up being a 500-meter swim for them.”

Once competitors finished the swim, they ran to a bicycle corral, grabbed a bike, and began the biking portion on the race. For some, this leg of the race proved to be the most difficult because of the force of the wind.

“The race was put together really well,” said Tai Blechta, graph design business owner and race competitor. “The bike course was the best event in the race because of all the twists, turns and curves that we had to go around.”

After they completed the 11.1-mile bike course, competitors had to pull the last bit of juice out of their bodies and push themselves to run the 5-kilometer course to the finish line.

“The run was definitely the hardest part of the whole triathlon,” said Chris Larson, triathlon competitor. “The whole first half of the run portion was up hill, and after swimming 500 meters and riding a bicycle for what seemed to be forever, by the time you reach the run, you’re already spent.”

As the clock continued its count, runner number 651 crossed the finish line with a commanding lead over all of the other competitors, ending at 52:49.

“I train all year-round for triathlons, because it’s what I do,” said Tai Blechta, a Honolulu native. “My roommate was out here, so we had a little competition just between the two of us. That pushed me, and my sponsors are



Lance Cpl. Roger Nelson

Triathlon participants begin the the 10th Annual Marine Aircraft Group 24 Triathlon with a 500-meter swim, May 20, at the Marine Corps Air Facility.

always pushing me to train so this was a good race.”

Blechta said he came into the triathlon knowing he would be in the top three competitors to cross the finish line, because of how well he had done in previous

triathlons. “We do these triathlons because it gives units a way to compete against civilians,” said Burkdall. “It also helps the unit raise money for events and is a great was for them to raise the morale of their troops.”

Steel Reign slides by 3rd Marine Regiment 20-19

Lance Cpl. Edward C. deBree
Combat Correspondent

Steel Reign defeated 3rd Marine Regiment, 20-19, in an intramural soft ball game, May

offense or defense. During the fifth inning, as Steel Reign was up to bat, Ginestra made a death-defying leap into the air to catch the ball. While Steel Reign’s Marquis Bean was up to bat, the pitcher struck him out,

Schmidt agreed.

“We played horrible today,” he said. “Half the team is deployed to (Hawaii Combined Arms Exercise). This is the eighth game we’ve played with this many people. We played a



Lance Cpl. Roger L. Nelson

Carlos Moreira, right-center fielder, Steel Reign, waits for a pitch during an intramural softball game against 3rd Marine Regiment at Risely Field, May 17.

17, here at Riseley Field.

Both teams entered the game with a 3-6 record for the season, and this game brought one team closer to the playoffs.

“I’m pretty confident about this game,” said Vincent Ginestra, assistant coach, 3rd Marine Regiment, during the third inning. “This whole season we’ve had a problem batting. We’ve been trying to hit the ball too hard, which gives them a chance to catch it in the outfield. We need to start getting base runs and hit the ball in the infield.”

Throughout the game, both teams were neck and neck for the winning position. One team trailed the other team by no more than 2 runs.

During each inning, each team would seem to put everything they had in to either

ending their turn being on the defense.

But as the players switched sides, 3rd Marine Regiment really turned on the offense and gave 1/12 a run for their money.

With one out and one on base, 3rd Marine Regiment’s Shane Cooding came up to bat to whomp the ball deep into no man’s land next to the fence line to bring in two runs. He almost repeated his actions in the next inning by hitting a triple, but unfortunately Steel Reign would end the game, 20-19.

“I think they didn’t play as well as they could have been playing, but they still put up a fight,” said Ginestra. “We had the problem batting but still did well.”

Steel Reign’s coach, Garry

team that has the same caliber of playing that we do. If we had all our players we would have played better.”

Although they, Schmidt said he thinks his team will not survive when it comes to the playoffs.

“There’s a few teams out there that have some power hitters,” said Schmidt. “When you have teams that have people that can hit ball after ball, out of the park, against a team that doesn’t have all of its players, there’s no chance. Some teams even have people that all they do is bat. They don’t play in the field or anything all they do is hit the ball then sit down in order to stay fresh throughout the whole game. There is no way that a team missing some of its players can compete against that.”

Red Lions crush Da Bears

Lance Cpl. Edward C. deBree
Combat Correspondent

Marine Heavy Helicopter 363’s “Red Lions” defeated Base Housing “Da Bears” 17-6, May 17, in an intramural softball game, here.

“I’m feeling good about this game,” said Da Bears’ Coach Jerry D. Riggins before the game. “Even though we’re down 1-9 in the record, we’ve been slowly building our game as we progress. We’re out here having fun and that’s all that matters to us.”

Within the first two innings of the game, the Red Lions proved to Da Bears that they were there to mean business. When Da Bears were up to bat, a pop fly ball was caught by the Red Lions and thrown to first base for a double play.

“We’re going to have to focus on our offense,” said Riggins, a 44-year-old Prairie, Mo. native. “We’re off to a slow start, but hopefully we will get some runs in.”

But the Red Lions’ defense proved to be too much for Da Bears. Each time the Red Lions would come up to bat, they would score run after run. But there were still some mistakes the Red Lions made while on defense.

During the third inning, a ground ball hit by Tatutaiaaso Fualema rolled pass the Red Lions’ third baseman’s glove and right through his legs, which had him targeted for ridicule by his teammates.

As the umpire signaled for the game to end, the Red Lions walked away victorious, 17-6, but not discouraging Da Bears, according their coach.

“We always put 100 percent in every game even, though Riggins. “But like I said before, the main thing about playing this is just having fun.

We’re one of two civilian teams in this league, and we are having a great time.”

Though Da Bears suffered a defeat this game, they did keep the Red Lions on their toes.

“They’re good to go,” said Daniel Trower, Red Lions’ coach. “They gave us a little run for our money.”

Though the Red Lions walked away with a victory, Trower said he does think his team needs to work on coming together as a team.

“We put out everything we had in this game,” said the 31-year-old St. Louis, Mo. native. “A lot of our guys are deployed to (Marine Corps Air Station) Yuma, so we’re constantly switching out. We’re trying to get



Lance Cpl. Roger L. Nelson

The first baseman for the Red Lions jumps for a high thrown ball at Risely Field, May 18.

of our record,” said Riggins. “But like I said before, the main thing about playing this is just having fun.

our chemistry together so we can go into the playoffs with our heads on our shoulders.”

The Red Lions’ record stands at 6-5.

Sports Briefs

June 3

Junior Golf Clinic Offered at Klipper
All junior golfers 6 to 17 are invited to participate in the Klipper Golf Course's Junior Golf Clinic. The first class begins June 3 and runs on Wednesday and Saturday for five weeks. Instruction covers basic golf fundamentals, etiquette, rules, and overall enjoyment of the game. The cost is \$175 per golfer or \$125 for returning golfers (see club house for details). Register in person at the Klipper's Pro Shop, or call 254-1745.

June 3 to 10

Women's Golf Week at Klipper Golf Course
Women golfers of all talents and ages are invited to the Kaneohe Klipper Golf Course for a weeklong celebration of women in golf. They will offer free clinics from June 3 to 10. There is limited space, so call 254-1745.

June 12

Junior Basic Sailing Classes Offered
The Base Marina will offer Junior Sailing courses to patrons 8 to 18, beginning June 12. Courses last for two weeks and cost \$99. Additional courses run throughout the summer. If interested, register now by calling 254-7666 or 254-7667, or visit the Base Marina .

June 21

SNCO Golf Tournament
Swing into the summer with Subaru and the MCCS SNCO Club at the SNCO Golf Tournament, June 21 at the Kaneohe Klipper Golf Course. Pick up an entry form at the Klipper Golf Course, SNCO Club, or call 254-5592. Entry fees are \$43 for Club members, and \$55 for all other participants. The tournament is open to all Staff NCOs.

June 30 to July 4

Register for BayFest Sporting Events
Participants interested in the BayFest BodySearch or Bathtub Regatta are now invited to register online at www.bayfesthawaii.com. Both events are free and open to the public. Visit the Bayfest Web site for further details about these fun sporting events.

Ongoing

Paintball Hawaii
Nestled behind the Lemon Lot is Paintball Hawaii. Cost is \$25 per person and includes one air refill, equipment and the field fee. The field is open on weekends from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 265-4283 for Friday appointments.

Personal Trainers Available at Semper Fit
For those looking to get into a tailored exercise regiment, or for those just looking for some good advice on weight management and weight control, Semper Fit Center offers free personal training consultation. Call Semper Fit Center at 257-7597 to schedule an appointment.

Semper Fit Center Offers Array of Aerobics
The MCCS Semper Fit Center announces a new and expanded aerobics program. These new classes now being offered include a variety of workouts. Call 254-7597 for more information on the various classes now offered.

Deep-Sea Fishing Charters Offered at Base Marina
Fishermen searching for convenient access to deep-sea charters need look no further than the MCB Hawaii Base Marina. Bill Collector Fishing Charters offers numerous charter packages accommodating up to six passengers. Avoiding the traffic and crowd of Oahu's South Shore, Bill Collectors charters fish off the uncrowded waters of windward Oahu. Call the Base Marina to charter the Bill Collector at 257-7667 or 254-7666.

Parents for Fitness
This cooperative babysitting effort is available at the Semper Fit Center for children 6 weeks and older. All active duty service members and their families may participate; however, PFFP participants are required to volunteer baby-sit three times per month. For more information, call 291-9131.

Massage Therapy
Massage therapy, by certified massage therapists, is available at Kaneohe Bay and Camp Smith. Massage therapy will help relieve your mental and physical fatigue and improve overall circulation and body tone. Choose from Shiatsu, Swedish, Lomi, deep-tissue and even hot-rock therapy. For appointments call 254-7597 or Camp Smith at 477-5197.

Okinawa Kenpo Karate
Every Tuesday and Thursday, join MCCS Youth Activities' contractor for Kenpo Karate Kobudo classes, held from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Building 1391, located behind the old 7-Day Store. For information call 254-7610.

Harlequins knock competition

Lance Cpl. Roger L. Nelson
Combat Correspondent

The Honolulu Harlequins beat the Special Operations Capable Pacific Rugby team Saturday during the SOCPAC rugby teams first rugby game. "A lot of the guys on our team are brand new to the sport," said Ken Sainz, SOCPAC player. "So I think we did pretty good being that this is the first experience playing rugby for the majority of us." The Harlequins, on the other hand, have been a team for many years and get together every Tuesday and Thursday to practice. "We came out here expecting to dominate them," said Mitchell West, Harlequin center. "But they played really hard and made a few minor mistakes that would be expected, but the fitness is their and they're playing their hearts out." West said that he knew before the game that the SOCPAC team would be

in good shape, because it's a team made up of Marines and Sailors. "We practice a lot and have games every Saturday at Kapiolani Park," said West. "So I'm impressed with how well their team

held their own and came out and played so hard. It made for a real fun and exciting game, I see them getting a lot better and eventually beating a lot of teams they play against."



Lance Cpl. Roger Nelson
A player from the SOCPAC Rugby Club tries to break through members of the Honolulu Harlequins during a rugby game held here, May 20.

Recruits pummel away in pugil sticks training

Lance Cpl. Dorian Gardner
MCRD San Diego

Marine Corps recruit Depot San Diego – With a helmet, some pads and a cushioned stick, recruits from B Company battled one another as they honed their skills to be named the victors of pugil sticks. Every Marine in boot camp undergoes this exercise. During this event, which simulates fighting with an M-16A2 service rifle with fixed bayonets, recruits were shown proper techniques and execution with the weapon. Though this combat simulation is a part of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, it serves a different purpose. "It is a designed inoculation of violence," said Sgt. Sergio Esquivel, martial arts instructor. "A lot of recruits have never been put in a situation where people try to attack them. This introduces them to a different spectrum of violence." Before the fight began, recruits were given safety gear to avoid injury. Their safety gear included a helmet with full-face mask, groin protection and flak jacket with a neck roll. The stick they used was also padded around their hands to circumvent broken phalanges. To ensure the recruits executed moves properly, a Martial Arts Instructor was present. For the recruits to pass this intense training, they must demonstrate proficient skill in three stages, which takes place over the last three weeks of first phase. During the first stage, B Company, drill instructors and Instructional Training Company instructors demonstrated fighting techniques and then had recruits practice it on a flat dirt surface near the depot's war-fighting infiltration course, which is included in bayonet training. In the course, recruits low-crawl under barbed wire and through tunnels, jump walls and cross ropes in firing teams of four.

Once recruits showed instructors they knew what they were doing, they were given their first opportunity to fight. "I liked it," said Recruit Jeremy Jones, E Company. "The feel of fighting and having the other recruits screaming for you. Even if you are scared, the recruits around you make you want to win." The thought of defeating another recruit from a different platoon in a pugil stick bout intensified the combat, especially when the drill instructors watched and encouraged the fierce battles, according to Jones. After the first fight, a third man was thrown into the mix. Between the three recruits, each took a turn defending against two recruits and then teaming up to attack one recruit. The final stage of combat is fought in the Thunder Dome. Already fatigued from completing an infiltration course, recruits geared up and screamed down a path leading into a padded room. In this dome, recruits fought the final bout with drill instructors and company staff motivating them. The purpose of this training went beyond bragging rights and platoon rivalry. "It trains Marines to function when faced with stress and violence," according to pugil Sticks training guide, MA-1.05. "It prepares Marines to deliver a blow and take a blow." Loud cheers and hard blows kept recruits



Lance Cpl. Dorian Gardner
A Company B recruit scores a finishing blow during a Thunder Dome pugil stick match.

fighting in the ring. Now experienced with their simulated rifle and bayonet, recruits are able to fight their enemies at a close range.

Sheriffs take it on the chin, lose main event

Cpl. Miguel Carasco
MCB Pendleton

Whittier, Calif. – The Camp Pendleton Varsity Boxing Team squared off against the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department's fighters at the Sheriff's Academy Saturday in Whittier. The event was held to help raise money for the City of Hope, which is an organization that helps under privileged children in the Los Angeles community. It drew a crowd of more than 1,500 fans — many of whom made the road trip to support the Marines. "I was shocked by the turnout of fans rooting for the Marines while we were in the Sheriff's own back yard," said Anthony Gonzales, the boxing coach for the Camp Pendleton Varsity Boxing Team. Despite the strong support, the Marines lost three of the five bouts; they participated in on the evening to judges' decisions. But in the night's two final fights, Marines earned back-to-back victories. In the final bout of the night, Juan Hernandez, fighting in the Super Heavyweight Division, came



Cpl. Miguel A. Carrasco Jr.
Gonzolo Leon lands a right hook on his opponent during a match between the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department vs. Camp Pendleton Boxing Team at the Sheriff's Academy in Whittier.

away with a victory over deputy Eddie Contreras by decision. It looked like Hernandez might record a knockout after he put Contreras on the ground in the first round, but the fight wound up going the

three-round distance in favor of Hernandez. Will Braley, fighting in the 178-pound Light Heavyweight Division, also took care of deputy James Terrell earlier in the evening with a victory by decision. For his impressive effort, Braley was named the Most Outstanding Fighter for the event. "It's always good to win the main events, especially being on the road," said Gonzales, who has been coaching the Camp Pendleton Varsity Team for several years now. "With it being the last two fights of the night, the crowd was completely in it." While Hernandez and Braley were victorious, fellow Marines Gonzolo Leon, Douglas Parthero and Antonio Webster all lost by decisions. The plan for the team is to get its Marine Corps training done and prepare for its next showdown in either July or August. The All-Marine Corps Boxing Coach will be hosting a clinic from June 16 to 20 at the 33 Area Fitness Center. The event is open to all Marines.

Guard against combat stress, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Perry Lockhart
LIFELines

As the recently released LIFELines series, COMBAT STRESS – Normal Reaction to Abnormal Conditions points out suffering trauma is an inevitable fact of life that begins at birth and ends only with death. Our lives are defined by what we experience and how we react to all of the events surrounding us, for better or worse. While we may prefer to travel life's road without hitting the potholes and bumps, it's impossible to avoid all of them.

Bad things do happen on the road to Easy Street. From infancy, we develop coping skills to deal with the flats and fender benders of life. Fortunately, most of our problems are just dings and scratches, requiring only minor repair or a day in the shop. Because they are so frequent, we more or less get used to dealing with them.

But when a major accident happens — the life-threatening, horrific episode that changes your life forever — typical coping skills may not be enough to get you back on the road. In fact, you might not feel the true effects until well after the physical scars have healed.

Definition

Combat Stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD can develop after exposure to a terrifying combat event or natural ordeal. According to the National Center for PTSD, 7.8 percent of Americans will experience PTSD at some point, with women – 10.4 percent – twice as likely as men – 5 percent. Service members who have seen battle are, of course, even more at risk; it's estimated that 30 percent of Vietnam veterans have suffered PTSD and the numbers for more recent combat are still being calculated.

According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition, PTSD can occur after an event that causes intense fear, horror, or extreme helplessness. Such events include:

- Threat of death or loss of physical integrity to the survivor.
- Death, threat of death, or loss of physical integrity to family or close friends. (In this case, the survivor does not have to be physically present.)
- Sudden loss of home or community.
- Seeing another person who has been seriously injured or killed.

PTSD can develop after you experience a serious accident or injury, a shooting or stabbing, or sexual or domestic abuse, after the unexpected death of a family member or friend or a child's life-threatening illness, or after you witness a killing or serious injury, endure a natural disaster, or hear about or are exposed to terrorist events.

PTSD can develop within three months of the event, and symptoms last at least a month, but it may be years before symptoms appear — in some cases, decades. Left untreated, it can significantly impair your health, your sex life, your marriage, and friendships.

Symptoms

According to the American Counseling Association

(ACA), the first step toward recovery is to recognize the signs. Do you or a loved one have any of these symptoms?

- Re-experiencing the event through vivid memories or flashbacks.
- Feeling "emotionally numb."
- Feeling overwhelmed by what would normally be everyday situations and diminished interest in doing



File Photo

normal tasks or pursuing usual interests.

- Crying uncontrollably. (This in itself can be distressing to males, especially military men.)
- Withdrawing or isolating oneself from family and friends, and avoiding social situations.
- Relying increasingly on alcohol or drugs to get through the day.
- Feeling extremely moody, irritable, angry, suspicious, or frightened.
- Having difficulty falling or staying asleep, sleeping too much, and having nightmares.

- Feeling guilty about surviving the event or being unable to solve the problem, change the event, or prevent the disaster.
- Feeling fear and a sense of doom about the future.

Many people with PTSD have involuntary flashbacks,

obsessive memories, nightmares, or frightening thoughts, especially when exposed to events or objects that remind them of the trauma (something as simple as seeing or hearing a jet fly over, for example).

Anniversaries of the event can also trigger symptoms. Most people with PTSD try to avoid any reminders of the ordeal.

Treating PTSD

Once PTSD appears, the severity and duration vary. Some people recover within six months, while others suffer much longer. Depression, gastrointestinal problems, and other disorders may accompany PTSD, and may even mask the symptoms, so it's important for anyone who has suffered severe trauma in their life to discuss this with their physician if they're being treated for other illnesses.

- When PTSD has been properly diagnosed, a variety of treatments are available. These include:
 - Cognitive behavioral therapy
 - Group therapy
 - Exposure therapy, in which the patient gradually and repeatedly relives the frightening experience under safe, controlled conditions to help him or her work through the trauma.

- Medications to help ease associated symptoms of depression and anxiety and help promote sleep. Scientists are studying which treatments work best for which type of trauma, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. (For example, Zoloft (sertraline hydrochloride) has been approved for PTSD.)

- Education and practicing self-help techniques.

It's never too late to begin treatment if you or someone you care about is suffering from PTSD. There may be no quick fix, but facing and dealing with PTSD can only benefit you and all those around you.

Long deployments are emotional roller coasters for service members

Story by Staff Sgt. Chad McMeen
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq – Many emotions are stirred when you talk about leaving home for an extended period of time. The fact that many of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Marines and Sailors have deployed for a full year to the war-torn region of the world known as Iraq, adds to the strain on personal feelings from service members, family members and loved ones.

Members of the U.S. Armed Forces know the inherent dangers involved in their line of work. Additionally, the senior military leaders do a great deal to prepare everyone for the inevitable time away from home but, the reality is; leaving is never easy.

Approximately three months ago, Marines loaded with gear required for their duty in Iraq, stepped onto a plane headed toward the wide-open desert of the Western Al Anbar Province. Some said good-bye to family and friends with embraces and tears, while others said a silent good-bye to the base they call home. Either way, everyone leaving knew it would be a long time before they saw American soil again.

"For me leaving on the bus was the hardest part of the departure. Seeing my family sitting in the vehicle and us driving off in the bus was the hardest," said Staff Sgt. Anthony D. Ward, aviation supply chief, aviation logistics division, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, 3rd MAW. "I knew at that point, that would be the last time I was going to see them in a long time."

Ward and his wife, Melissa, have been married for 18 years and neither of them are new to being separated by deployments. Unfortunately, their youngest child, Sekai, has had a difficult time with the new transition.

"I hadn't prepared for how my 6-year-old

son would react," explained Ward. "That moment when I hugged him and he actually realized that everyone around him was crying was tough to handle. It finally hit him that something was going on."

Staying in communication with his family from a work computer connection has eased some of the stress, but Ward mentioned his son is still having a little trouble coping with the situation.

"The 90-day mark just passed and the last part will go by quickly," said Ward, a Dallas native. "We just have to push through the middle of the deployment."

Strain as time goes on

No matter how much planning is done prior to the deployment, every issue cannot be anticipated. Inevitably, as soon as a service member travels more than 7,000 miles away, something will go wrong. Sometimes it is as simple as a leaky faucet in the kitchen and other times it is more serious, such as a death in the family.

"Everything has gone pretty well but I think one of the more difficult things for my wife right now is just holding a schedule," explained Sgt. Antoine LeBlanc, avionics calibration technician, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd MAW. "She is left doing everything she used to do in addition to the things I took care of. She hardly has any time to herself and I don't think she has the opportunity very often to exercise, lay in a bathtub or just relax."

Halfway around the world, deployed service members are faced with their own set of issues. An example of this are the Marines assigned to security details. While typically busy with traffic and identification checks, they are often faced with moments of solitude.

"There's not a moment that goes by that I



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Chad McMeen

A married female Marine stands at the position of attention April 1 during an awards and promotion ceremony. The formation was held days before the squadron headed home after a six-month deployment to Iraq. She works in a predominately male environment with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 774, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, based out of Richmond, Va. Deployments can have a heavy strain on marriages but communication between couples over distance can sometimes strengthen the relationship.

Understand childrens’ reaction to returning moms, dads

Jennifer Dyer Cornelissen
LIFELines

Nothing compares to a child's eager hug at the end of a long deployment. But what if your child doesn't respond to you warmly? Some children may feel anxiety or fear on the return of a deployed parent, while infants may forget their father or mother entirely. When faced with an unexpected reaction from a child, military parents need to understand normal behavior, prevent disengagement, learn strategies to reconnect, and take time to renew their relationship with their child.

Deployments and Children

Children's response to their parent's deployment varies by age. For example, babies may not remember absent parents, while toddlers and preschoolers can act shy or afraid. School-age children often demand attention, while teenagers may withdraw. It is normal for children of any age — and their parents — to feel anxious about a reunion.

Maggie Randall, a Navy spouse in Portsmouth, Va., was unsure of how her 2-year-old son Jack would react to his father, Lt. Craig Randall, after nine months apart. But her concern disappeared quickly.

“I was surprised at how easily he went to his father,” Randall said. "They just picked up where they left off nine months earlier." For most families, worries will resolve quickly once the service member returns.

Maintain Ties

The best way to ease your child's reaction to your return is to maintain a rela-



Lance Cpl. Edward C. deBree

Sergeant Christopher Cook, motor transportation mechanic, 1st Battalion 3rd Marine Regiment, holds his son Jacob, and daughter Kayleigh for the first time after having ben deployed for five months to Afghanistan where he served in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

tionship during deployment. Your anxiety at missing the changes in your child will be lessened by communication. Tried-and-true strategies to stay close in spite of distance include displaying family pictures in the home, exchanging individual e-mails, letters and packages, making video and audiotapes of family time, and communicating via telephone or video conference when possible.

A quick return to normal will occur if you adopt strategies that keep the

lines of communication open. Randall believes that Jack's bedtime routine of watching a videotape of him and his father playing together made their reunion more natural.

Reconnect the Dots

What if, in spite of your efforts, your child seems to be afraid of you or doesn't remember you? Follow these tips to reestablish your bond:

- Give your child time to get to know you again. Don't expect your son or

daughter to respond with warmth immediately.

- Listen carefully and answer questions honestly.
- Talk to your child. Say you loved and missed your child while you were gone.
- Show interest in your child's school activities and hobbies.
- Familiarize yourself with your child's routine, don't try to change it immediately, and be flexible.
- Go on an outing together. Give your child your individual time and attention.

- Treat your child with love and kindness. Be positive and avoid criticisms.

- Don't expect your family to behave like they're onboard ship or in a desert tent or barracks. Don't overdo discipline.

Your son or daughter has grown and changed while you were gone. Slow down, get to know your child again, and reestablish your place in the family.

Go Slow

Remember to be patient. While you can't take back

the time spent apart, you can make new memories together.

More information is available from the LIFELines' Children and Deployment section. You can get to this information by logging on to www.usmc.mil and using the LIFELines link.

While deployments can be tough on families, reunions aren't always easy either. These simple tips should help keep the reunion jitters to a minimum.

don't think about my wife, my three stepchildren and my 3-year-old daughter from a previous marriage," said Sgt. James K. Snead, as he stood post in an aluminum guard tower, keeping records of every vehicle that passes from behind his M-240G machine gun position.

Snead is a member of the Tactical Air Command Center Security Detachment, 1st Battalion, 109th Infantry Regiment Mechanized Infantry, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd MAW, and deployed in January.

Not all emotions are based on negative situations. Each command makes an effort to provide entertainment to break up the monotony and stress of the day-to-day job. Every individual deals with the stress in a different way and, therefore, the relief can come in a variety of forms.

Examples of entertainment for deployed forces are United Service Organizations comedy tours of the area, gathering for team sports or even weekly poker games.

"Al Asad is not the most pleasant of places to be, but I try to make the most of it and enjoy life. My office has a Sunday ritual -- the marathon of volleyball -- and on other days I enjoy getting out on my bicycle," said Gunnery Sgt. Russell J. Murzyn, information assurance technician, MWHS-3. "Of course, cycling here does not compare to cycling in San Diego, but it's still great to get out on the bike and have all your worries and stress fall by the wayside once you're dancing on the pedals."

There is a certain level of strength needed by the men and women of the armed forces to get through the situations they are faced with.

"The biggest challenge of deploying this time has been missing my family," said LeBlanc, who is now on his second deployment to Iraq. "The last time I came out here my daughter was only a couple of months old and I hadn't bonded with her much. Now she's almost 2 years old and when I left I was much closer with her and my wife."

Working things out

As time goes on a routine is established on both sides of the world and communication with loved ones becomes more defined and structured.

"When I first got out here, my wife and I were talking every day and now we've slowed down to about once a week," said LeBlanc, a native

of Kenner, La. "That seems to be helping because you have time to think about things and you focus on the important stuff."

Various forms of communication are available but many require standing in line and waiting for an available spot or staying late at work because of the time difference.

"It's great when I can video chat with my wife and kids but sometimes that is very difficult too," said Ward. "Even though my son says things are going well, I can see it in his eyes that he's thinking, 'You need to hurry up and come home because I'm missing you.'"

In Ward's absence he has the advantage of two older daughters, 14-year-old Cherika and 17-year-old Chalissia, in the household to help with the daily duties.

"My older daughters have stepped up in playing my role and that helps a lot," explained Ward.

The strain of a full year deployment is also made a little easier in part to a 15-day leave period where the service member can either fly home or to a variety of other locations. Additionally, many will receive a 4-day pass to Kuwait to help break up the daily work routine.

The Marines with 3rd MAW are not unlike any other deployed force. They work long hours in an uncomfortable environment while separated from their families and friends and most of them do it with a smile on their faces because this is what they joined to do. Doing their jobs in a deployed environment where their actions either directly or indirectly impact an entire country is powerful.

K-Bay Marine Corp Base Hawaii Intramural Sports



Cpl. Sara A. Carter

Marines from the Provost Marshals Office practice during their lunch break in preparation for an upcoming game. The team is one of nine base organizations who are participating in the 2006 intramural volleyball season.

Volleyball standings as of May 22			2-2	10	2	Soccer Standings		
TEAM	WINS	LOSSES	HQBN	10	3	TEAM	WINS	LOSSES
FED. FIRE DEPT	4	0	FACILITIES	9	3	CSSG-3	2	0
HSL-37	4	0	CSSG-3	8	4	HQBN	2	0
MAG-24	3	1	HMH-363	8	5	3RD RADIO BN	1	0
HEALTH CLINIC	3	3	VP-4	7	5	3D MARINE REG	0	1
CSSG-3	2	3	IPAC	7	7	VPU-2	0	2
VPU-2 “A”	1	3	HSL-37	6	8	MAG-24	0	2
VPU-2 “B”	1	4	MAG-24	5	8			
PMO “HQBN”	0	4	3D MARINE REG	4	8			
Summer Softball Standings			1/12	4	9			
TEAM	WINS	LOSSES	CSSG-3					
3RD RADIO BN	11	2	“MAINTENANCE”	2	11			
			HOUSING					
			“DA BEARS”	1	13			